1:Ingrams G-5 (1934 35)1936 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

Internal transit dues.

651 *Mukalla and Shihr.*

486 On every loaded camel leaving ... ... Re.1.

On every camel man[1] ... ... As.2.

Shibam.

On every *Bahar* brought in from Qu'aiti ports or territory ... ... $ ½.

On every *Bahar* from other places in Aden Protectorate or from Yemen ... ... $1¼.

Passport Fees (compulsory).

On every passport Rs.2

Photograph by state photographer Rs.3

Defence.

REGULAR ARMY.

704 The strength of the regular army is as follows: one Subedar, who apparently knows no drill and only appears in uniform on very special occasions; four Jemadars, of whom two are ex-Yemen Infantry officers, and two are Indians, one of them being a Pathan in command of the artillery; 350 to 400 Yafa'is, and 250 slaves.

The non-commissioned ranks are, Havildar, Naik and Lais Naik. The Yafa'is receive nine dollars a month, and the slaves one to three dollars as pocket-money, but they are much better off than the Yafa'is for they receive regular rations for themselves and every member of their families. They are provided with wives, and given milk, which is scarce, for their wives and children. The 702 cadet corps, already referred to, ensures a constant supply of disciplined recruits.

713 The force is armed with every sort of rifle, but principally Martini Henrys. They are said to keep them perfectly clean inside and out. There is a "range" behind the town. The regulars 714 are all provided with a khaki uniform, shirt and shorts, and a 708 red fez, but the uniform is not worn except by the guards at the palace and on special occasions. There are said to be parades every 533 two days. There is a band consisting of 14 who wear khaki uniforms and scarlet glengarries. The regulars for the most part are stationed in Mukalla, but there are a few in Shihr and Reida.

IRREGULARS.

704 There are said to be 1,000 to 1,200 irregulars officered by eleven 701 *Muqaddams* who receive 35 to 40 dollars a month. Each *Muqaddam* has a paid *Muawin* who receives 20 to 25 dollars, and each man is said to receive seven dollars a month. They are stationed in the districts. In Shibam there are 40 Yafa'is and 60 slaves. There are about 500 Yafa'is in the neighbourhood of Shibam who are [635] paid but allowed to work their own fields. The Sultan's representative in the Shibam province is in command of the troops.

[1] Members of certain tribes are exempted from this tax.

14: van der Meulen T-4 (1931) 1932 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

boundary of the region of the āl-Qa'ētī, and were advised to trust to the āl-Kathīr. About five days were considered necessary to get our caravan together, and these days were made use of for making a botanical collection on the limestone hills behind Makalla.

Von Wissmann made profile sketches of the hills, and made observations to get a good base for his road survey. We were thankful to make use of the permission granted us by the authorities to make a trip for two days along the coast to ash-Shihr, which was formerly the most important harbor. Even a short distance inland from Makalla the country becomes unsafe. We were taken in a sort of auto-bus belonging to the sultan round the inland side of the mass of rock at Makalla, after that close along the shore, and finally even along the flat sandy shore. The bus was quite full of armed guards. We were forbidden to go by the road over the mountains, since on that road some soldiers had been killed from an ambush a short time before.

We were thankful when, after many negotiations with the leaders of our caravan, the signal for departure could be given on the afternoon of May 8. From early morning until the afternoon the vizier had had to negotiate with a group of Bedouins, who were waiting for our caravan among the rocks near the road, just outside the whitewashed boundary marks of the town of Makalla, in order to satisfy a blood-feud. The vizier knew how to bargain for a safe passage, but to be quite safe he had us taken in a government auto to a point beyond the border. In the darkness of night we were set down by the side of the road to wait for our donkeys!

The journey to the inaccessible and fanatical land of Hadramaut was now begun. From the 9th to the 15th of May we traveled northwards,—first through the Wādī Himim. Finally we came to the terrible, monotonous plateau with table-mountains, known as *jōl*. For many days we marched over this limestone plateau with its basin-like depressions and its very scant vegetation.

During the daytime the heat was stifling, and at night it was so cold that for hours before the sun rose I was no longer able to sleep. The interminable, barren plain was covered all over with sharp, loose fragments of stone, and among these wound the narrow path along which from morning to night we steadily wended our way. Drinking water is here to be found in *negābas,* which are cisterns hewn out of the rock some three meters below the surface, with a narrow opening. Low ridges lead the scanty rainfall to the *negāba.* Owing to the narrow opening there is very little evaporation, and if one has no rope at hand with a vessel to draw water, this opening is just large enough to admit a man to dip it out. Near the *negāba* there is usually a little square building made by piling up rough stones in clay, this is called *murabba,* and here the midday hours with their scorching heat may be spent. For the sake of safety, our Bedouins avoided the *negābas* as places for passing the night. In the evening the neighborhood of the bivouac was carefully reconnoitred, and usually sentries were posted at night. The authorities at Makalla had given us for our personal protection two negro soldiers belonging to the famous slave army of the āl-Qa'ētī sultan. On May 15 we reached the wonderfully beautiful valley Wādī Dō'an. The descent of hundreds of meters of this almost perpendicular wall of rock with loaded camels was a difficult feat causing some anxiety; but the Bedouins and their camels reached the valley below without a single mishap. As we looked upon this *wādī,* hemmed in by its high walls of rock, it looked like a land of magic with its deep-green groves of date palms and its clay villages with great castles and high houses. A glowing heat as dry as dust prevailed in Wādī Dō'an night and day. The bright yellow and deep red bunches of dates were hanging ripening in the hot wind. In the shade of the magnificent and remarkably well kept trees the population were quietly waiting for the harvest time. A great deal of mixture with negro blood (of slaves) has

18:Ingrams G-3 (1934-36)1938 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

1933. In these last eighteen months however, and particularly during the last winter, the number of visitors, official and otherwise, runs into over one hundred, in fact, into several hundreds if naval visitors and tourists on the coast are included, for Mukalla has recently had the fresh experience of seeing bus loads of tourists from steamers driving through its street.

The more frequent and more intensive incursion of European visitors is of course in itself a great contrast with the recent past, but I think that the contrast which most strikes visitors who have returned to the country in the past year is the comparatively peaceful conditions which now prevail. Little more than a year ago every Badawin and tribesman in the country carried his rifle with him, even to walk across the street. Blood feuds were widespread, and even harmless travellers of the unarmed classes were at times likely to lose not only their property but their lives. Travellers by motor car had to take with them an escort when passing from village to village. In places there were extensive systems of trenches to pass from the villages to the fields, and I know of people who have spent as much as twenty years without getting beyond their own doors.

Now however all this has passed and it is comparatively rarely that you see a tribesman carrying a rifle, indeed many of them do not even carry the *jambiyas* or curved daggers which are almost as much a part of their dress as a walking-stick was of ours. How all this has come to pass is more a matter of the history of the Hadhramaut than its geography, but I should simply like to say that it was largely through the will of the people who have a genuine desire for peace and for the following of peaceful pursuits.

This new peace has resulted in a much greater contact between tribes and between different parts of the country and has made possible a great extension in communications. Eighteen months ago there were about half a dozen motors on the coast and about sixty in the interior, carried up by camels. By the completion of the Al Kaf road Tarim has been linked with Shihr and passenger-carrying lorries ply almost daily between the coast and the interior. When I left the country a couple of months ago there were at least two hundred motor vehicles in it and every ship was bringing one or two. Many more car tracks have been made and cars now go to almost all parts of the Hadhramaut, westwards to Al 'Abr and eastwards to As Som as well as up or down branch wadis. The Mukalla Government is also constructing another remarkably good motor road to the Hadhramaut which is being built northwards from Mukalla and southwards from Du'an. Something over 20 miles of the former and 10 of the latter had been completed when I left; about 60 miles remains to be done, of which the greater part is over the flat *jols* and offers no particular difficulties of construction. Starting from Mukalla you can now motor at least 300 miles in the Hadhramaut without recrossing your tracks, and there are over 500 miles of tracks altogether.

The possibilities of air transport have also been greatly improved. There were, eighteen months ago, eight landing-grounds in the five Sultanates in the eastern part of the Protectorate of which only three, Mukalla, Shibam, and Qishn, were used at all frequently. New landing-grounds have been constructed at Tarim, Seiyun, Hureidha, Al 'Abr, 'Azzan, Balhaf, Risib,

18:Ingrams G-3 (1934-36)1938 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

and we were in country with which there had been practically no contact It must really have been alarming to the Badawin: a noisy party in lorries, which they had not seen before, and ourselves in cars, shouting directions to each other in the night and firing Verey lights to show each other the way; but the Badawin materialized out of the darkness, most surprisingly without rifles, directed us time and again on our way, and pushed our cars out of the sand.

After Thukmein, which we left about half-past eleven, we had no great difficulty in moving on as the moon was up. We drove on for some hours and then stopped to let the rest of the party come up. It was bitterly cold and the keen wind cut through us as we huddled together trying to sleep on the sand, but we did sleep and woke to a marvellous dawn. The sunset of the night before, the brilliant moon, and the sunrise are three enduring memories of that night.

The four flat-topped hills of Al 'Abr lay about 10 miles ahead of us, and although only one of the lorries had come on, the other having had one of its many breakdowns, we decided to go on. It was marvellous hard sand on which a speed of fifty was easy and we had quickly left the lorry behind. We made our way into the wadi bed, myself acting as guide as I was the only one who knew the country even from the air. There were one or two Bureiki Sheikhs about with camels, and rather reluctantly they told us that the 'Abdulla bin 'Aun were also there with the camels. A few minutes' driving up the hard wadi brought us to the ruins of the fort, said by the Al 'Abdulla bin 'Aun to have been built by them.

The dozen or so Badawin round the well looked extremely surprised when the car drew up. I suppose they were hardly awake, as the morning was still chilly and they were all wearing their sheepskin coats. A few Bureiki Sheikhs came down and bade us welcome. All the rest of the Badawin claimed to belong to every tribe except the 'Abdulla bin 'Aun. Some said they were Sheikhs, some claimed to be Daham, a Yemeni tribe, and some Nahd, but there were a good many shifty looks and in the course of the morning we sorted out nine who had given themselves away and who finally admitted to belonging to this raiding section. There are only forty-three males all told of the 'Abdulla bin 'Aun, but from the amount of trouble they had given in the past it was well worth getting them under control. They have no houses or settled habitation and are about the only people of the Hadhramaut who have goatskin tents. They are part of the Al Hatim, but Bin Mulhi, their chief, says he has no control over them and the Sei'ar themselves were delighted when we took hostages from them and put in a garrison, whose function is to protect the travellers and not to interfere in other ways.

Presently the lorries came up and I installed the wireless and settled the garrison into temporary quarters. There was nothing at Al 'Abr except the ruined fort of which only one wall still stood, a small stone *murabba'a*, one of the dark cube-shaped shelters used by travellers all over the Hadhramaut, and a hut built of branches of trees and grass of which there was a great profusion. There was also a new *weli's* tomb decorated with ibex horns, and one of the Bureiki Sheikhs took us there and slapping the tomb addressed its lately canonized occupant and introduced us. We put the garrison into the

24:Meulen and Wissmann T-3 (1931)1932 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

expressions of general agreement. Shēkh Sālim went even further. If I would only stay one day more and speak with the leaders of the three parties, it would be an easy matter for me to bring about peace, for everyone was longing for it from the bottom of their hearts.

Many of their ideas were not new to me: I had heard them already in Diyār Āl Buqrī, in Sēwūn, in Terīm. Never, however, had they been posed with so much urgency and in such a concrete form. I was obliged to explain why it was impossible for me to assume the right to act as arbitrator. So long as the the Dutch could only enter the doors of Ḥaḍramaut with Britain's permission, so long would direct contact between our Government and the authorities of that land remain difficult. Also, as long as there existed no central power in the country, such contact would be out of the question. I could only give the advice to strive for unity and the formation of a central power. If they could not do this alone, then co-operation with the British authorities in Aden, to whom, also, they had turned in former times, seemed to be the obvious way.

The struggle was a war between relations, in which the Qeᶜēṭī Government was now also implicated. A certain Ṣāliḥ bin ᶜUbēd bin ᶜAbdād had got el-Ghurfa into his power by treachery. This place was formerly a free town, without a *dōla* and without taxes. The occupation was felt to be unendurable, not only by the other branches of Ṣāliḥ's family, who were envious, but also by the Government of el-Qeᶜēṭī. For there was already a treaty arrangement with Britain according to which the power in Ḥaḍramaut Proper should be divided between two groups: the Āl el-Qeᶜēṭī and the Āl Kathīr. El-Qeᶜēṭī would not put up with a third authority. The twenty two other branches of the Āl ᶜUmar — the family of Ṣāliḥ bin ᶜUbēd — also took a hand in the quarrel, and since then no solution to it has been found.

Towards sundown we took our leave of this group of three country-houses standing out most effectively, with their